

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



SAVED FROM THE WRECK.

CAPTAIN STAUNCY'S VOW.

CHAPTER V.

SWIFTLY and successfully the little brig retraced her steps, careering like a sea-fowl over the watery mountains that rose in her path, ever and anon plunging into the yawning abyss: but gallantly she rose again, and, shaking herself from brine and foam, bounded onward. Having ventured, after awhile, on the smallest show of canvass possible, the captain gave orders to sound the pumps, and sent Mogford below to ascertain how things looked in the hold.

No. 546.—JUNE 14, 1862.

The mate slipped down the fore hatchway, making his way over tightly packed bales, empty crates and barrels, which were stowed on an extemporized half orlop-deck; and, watching his opportunity, Jim Ortop, the 'prentice, descended too, for the purpose of getting an hour or two's undisturbed sleep. Discovering a crate half-filled with straw, he quietly stole into it, and, almost before the mate reached the deck again, was wrapped in slumber.

"There are two feet of water, sir, or a little more," said Mogford, when he reappeared; "but I don't think there is much wrong, and the weather is moderating."

B B

PRICE ONE PENNY.

"See that there's a good look-out kept," replied the captain; "we shall soon, at this rate, be upon the coast." And scarcely were the words uttered, when a voice was heard from the forecastle, struggling for audience against the humming wind, "Land on the starboard bow!"

A misty line of elevated land was speedily traceable in the distance, and, wishing to avoid proximity to such a shore, the captain directed that the vessel should be brought up towards the wind. Such, however, was the force of the gale, and such the difficulty of spreading even a modicum of canvas, that Stauncy's seamanship was taxed to the utmost to save the ship from the grasp of that rock-bound coast. They were driven sufficiently near to discern, by the dusky moonlight, its frowning precipices, against which the sea broke heavily with deafening roar, sending up jets of spray into nooks and crannies where mers and puffins had sought a roosting-place, and scaring them away to seek, with angry scream, a quieter retreat; but as yet there was no manifest danger.

"We're handy Bude Bay," said Pickard, who was assisting Cole at the wheel; "I know the look of that ugly headland, or whatever it is, well enough. We were coming home from America one time, and by our dead reckoning we ought—"

"Down helm! run up the jib, and shake out the fore-top sail," said the captain, sharply. "We're well in for Bude Bay, and shall hardly clear the land without making all the sail we can."

The vessel answered well to her helm, springing her luff to Stauncy's satisfaction, but yawed alarmingly when a heavy sea struck her on the beam; so that he perceived at once how much depended on vigorous measures.

Accordingly, the main-top-sail and main-sail were tried on, an experiment which made the "Sarah Anne" heel over so much that she was well nigh on her beam ends; but it succeeded, so that the brig was kept at a respectful distance from the grim-looking rocks which scowled behind snowy foam, and every heart felt light and hopeful, when Hartland Point stood out in the distance, like a huge fog-bank, and the arms of Bideford Bay seemed stretched out rejoicingly, to welcome them back again.

"Sound the pumps again," said the captain, "and I'll go below myself."

"The water has gained on us rapidly, Mr. Mogford," was his first remark, on emerging from the hold, where he had unconsciously disturbed the slumbers of Jim Ortop. "Every time she pitches, it seems to pour in; we'll run up under Lundy, and wait for the tide. Keep the pumps agoing."

In less than half an hour he descended again, and seemed to examine with some care the state of the seams. The lantern carried in his hand was suddenly extinguished, and the apprentice, who had fallen into a doze, was aroused by a harsh rasping sound which startled him, and stirred his curiosity. It went on for some minutes, and then, as though every barrel in the hold had been pierced at once, a gurgling gushing noise assailed his ears, which taxed his powers of consideration no little; and, as it lasted for a considerable time, his brain became greatly excited. A scrambling over bales and crates succeeded; and, as the captain swung himself up the hatchway, Jim heard him say, "Mr. Mogford, I've been watching the water below, and it's gaining on us every minute;" and then, in a louder tone—"All hands to the pumps! Where's that skulking Ortop got to?"

Now, Ortop was just beginning to engage in a small expedition on his own account. Creeping quietly down

to the part from whence the grating noise had proceeded, he passed his hands inquiringly in all directions; but nothing could he discover save a little trickling stream, which seemed to spring from under a projecting brennel, standing out from the ship's side like a giant vent-peg. So he made his way to the crate again, and, considering that he might as well be rope's-ended for a long nap as a short one, made himself as comfortable as he could.

Daylight at length began faintly to appear, and the ship rolled and laboured as before; for, though the tempest had spent itself and was hushing up, she had now a considerable depth of water in her, as Stauncy had reported.

"Land ahead, sir!" said the mate.

"I see it, Mogford, up helm! We'll run round off the cave."

The brig fell off, and before she had passed Rat Island, to the south of Lundy, the captain made another descent into the hold, guided by the light of a lantern. The candle was extinguished, the old creaking sound followed, and then that self-same rushing, splashing commotion which had astonished the apprentice before, astonished him again, as though the skipper were tapping the casks for his private gratification. On, and on, and on, the mysterious rush continued, and the captain, having once more groped his way upward, exclaimed, "Get the boats ready for lowering: we're water-logged, sure enough. See that everything is right, Mr. Mogford, and I'll have another look."

And, lantern in hand, he visited the mysterious spot once more, and the same harsh notes and hissing chorus chimed in with creaking timbers and splashing waves.

By this time the water had gained the aforesaid orlop-deck, and was slushing amongst the stowage; so that, after the captain had again ascended, the apprentice began to look out for a favourable time to accomplish his escape.

"Is all ready?" said Stauncy.

"All ready, sir," replied the mate.

"Then get what you can out of the ship, all of you, for she's settling down fast."

The jolly-boat was lowered first, and manned by six of the crew; but the painter snapped before they had settled themselves, and away she went astern, dancing over the billows, soon lost to view in the hazy morning twilight.

"Look sharp there!" said the captain; "lower away quick;" and the other boat took the water like a gull. The 'prentice, who had turned up in the nick of time, Sam Pickard, the mate, and Stauncy jumped into her, and scarcely had they cleared the vessel, when her death struggle came on. It was soon over, however. A heavy sea raised her by the stern, and, unable to recover herself, she swayed and writhed for a moment, and then sunk headlong into the leaping waters, which closed over her hurriedly, clashing and seething amid the moaning of the wind and the booming of the broken surges against the beetling cliffs of Lundy Isle.

CHAPTER VI.

CALAMITY and danger are among the many circumstances which help to break down the distinctions of life into reasonable and helpful differences, and serve to bring out the cementing power of sympathy, which is the surest bond of social union. A common trouble does much to awaken a common interest; and so it proved with the saved remnant who pulled for their lives from the "Sarah Ann." The captain, the cook, the mate, and the cabin boy, forgot for the time those ruling ideas of superior and inferior, which so frequently make great

men tyrants, and poor men obsequious, and as companions in tribulation endeavoured without distinction to manage the boat and effect a landing. But the task was no easy one, and, had they been strangers to the island, in all probability they would have perished on the rocky shore; for Lundy tolerates but one small beach, defying intrusion elsewhere by its rough inaccessible cliffs, towering hundreds of feet above the sea. For that beach the seamen longed and strove, and their efforts were so far successful, that they ran in amongst the breakers, where, despite their utmost efforts, the boat was capsized, and they had to struggle as best they could for a footing on the gritty strand.

"Just," exclaimed the 'prentice in a moody tone, as they stood on the shore wringing out their drenched clothes—"just."

"Just what?" said Stauney, in a kinder tone than Jim was accustomed to.

"Just saved," he replied; "but I 'spose you reckoned on that, when the brig was once off here."

"Why, to be sure," rejoined the mate; "if there was any chance for us, it was the lee of Lundy, where nobody is more at home than ourselves."

"Certainly," responded the captain; "I made sure of a chance if we only rounded Lametry; and here we are."

"We've only got what we stand up in," the 'prentice answered, in a querulous and somewhat independent tone; "I wonder who'll pay me for all I've lost."

"You'll get as good a share as the rest," said Pickard; "and I wonder, Mister Jim, what makes you so forward."

"I've got as much right to speak as you," he replied. "I don't think we ought to be turned adrift this way, and lose everything; we aint ought."

"Never mind him," said the captain, apparently anxious to put an end to the dialogue; "he's a saucy chap. A few hours more pickling would have preserved him better. We'll get up to the top and rouse 'em up in the old Keep;" and he turned towards the narrow path which wound up the mountain side.

The cotters resident on the bleak island received them kindly, and, having dried their clothes and satisfied their hunger, proposed a turn in for a few hours' rest.

"I don't want any rest," said Jim; "I had a good sleep in one of the empty crates."

"You had, eh!" replied Pickard; "that's where you were hiding so long, was it? how did you get a berth there, I wonder?"

"Well, I was knocked up, and when the mate went down the fore-hatch I slipped after him."

"I wish I'd pitched you overboard," said Stauney hastily; "and very much inclined I feel to slip you down the Devil's Lime Kiln,* to spout your impudence to the gannets, or to the porpoises when they come in with the tide."

In fact, the 'prentice's disclosure of his sleeping quarters during the storm considerably discomposed the captain's serenity, calling up feelings whose first expression was anger; but, having lain down with the mate and cook, and spent an hour in reflection, he determined to heave the lead and proceed cautiously.

The morning broke with hopeful promise. A fresh cold breeze, into which the gale had moderated, blew directly for the opposite quarter, as though the blustering tornado, having vented its passion, had turned repentant, and was now retracing its track with sober

pace. There was still a tumbling sea on; but soon the bright blue sky, and the sharp bracing air, dispelled all omens suggested by the past, and a fleet of trawlers from Clovelly was to be seen dotting the heaving bosom of the ocean in all directions.

A signal was hoisted which drew one of the smacks towards the island, and Stauney and his companions were consigned to the safe keeping of the master of a boat. The mate and Pickard settled down in the stern-sheets, and engaged in a close and earnest conversation with the steersman, whilst the captain went over the story of the storm to the skipper, and then slipped forward to the bow, where Jim Ortop was seated on a coil of rope, gazing intently into the sky.

"You needn't mind about the things you've lost, Jim," said the captain; "I'll rig you out again, and, if you behave yourself to my satisfaction, you shall have a guinea to boot, to sport with while ashore."

The golden idea roused Jim from his contemplations, and was far too large to be taken in at once; it upset him completely. Whatever his thoughts and emotions may have been as he sat staring into vacuity, they were routed and sent to the gulls by this new gilded intruder. A guinea! He had scarcely ever seen one. Extravagant and romantic ideas had always been conjured up when people talked in his hearing of that precious coin. He pictured it to his mind. He fancied that he felt it in his hand. It seemed as though the universe itself would be purchaseable; and, looking up into the captain's face with an animated eye, he said, "Shall I fetch it, sir?"

"Yes, Jim, come to my house when we get to Northam, and you shall have a guinea sure enough, that is, if you mind and behave yourself."

The 'prentice did not reply. The prospect of possessing a guinea had gathered all his thoughts into one sentiment, all his sensations into one passion; and his deepest eyes again settled into an earnest gaze on the swelling sea, as though he had been spell-bound.

The captain saw that he had hit the nail on the head, as he expressed it to himself, and, leaving Jim to his dreams, went aft with lighter heart than he expected.

"I wonder, Mogford," he said, "where the other poor fellows are." And then, addressing himself to the fishermen, asked whether anything had been seen of a boat with six men in it. But no one had heard or seen thereof; and indeed, whilst Stauney was speaking, a wanderer on Braunton sands picked up a portion of a boat's stern with "Sarah Ann" on it: so that the story is soon told. The jolly-boat had been swamped, or stove on the rocks, and the men who were borne away in her from the foundering brig, soon followed the fated vessel to a watery grave. No human eye beheld that ocean funeral; no human voice bewailed them as they went to rest. The booming billows rang out their passing bell. The foam-draped waves joined hands to consign them to the deep. The moaning wind sang mournfully their requiem, and said farewell, as though the angry sea knew no remorse, and would never surrender its prey again.

MEN I HAVE KNOWN.

THE REV. W. LISLE BOWLES.

Not many years ago, there were living two poets, whose works were known when Wordsworth was a youth—Samuel Rogers and William Lisle Bowles—both near the goodly age of fourscore years and ten. The poetry of these survivors of a bygone generation was characterized by much in common. Both were remarkable for pleas-

*A singular hole so called, at the south-west point, about eighty yards square at the top, and 250 feet in depth, communicating by an outlet with the sea.

ing and reflective sentiment, accompanied with great refinement of taste.

Referring lately to the works of Bowles, I was surprised to find that his versification, though beautiful, was intelligible enough to be admired by contemporary judges; albeit, it did not touch that magnifying obscurity and transcendental mysticism which signalizes the most applauded of our living bards. To use a modern phrase, he was not a "sensation" poet, outraging possibilities, and shocking common sense and reason. Yet had his poetry very considerable effect upon the period to which he belonged, before, and even after Scott and Byron stormed the public, and caused some who will nevertheless go down to posterity, to be partially forgotten or neglected. True, Campbell had sung brave ballads; Moore chanted Irish melodies; Wordsworth floated some sweet flowers among his weeds on the lakes; Southey launched several terrible epics; and other authors were springing into life—and all borrowed a leaf out of Bowles' store. Coleridge, as far as I remember, was the only one to acknowledge the obligation in verse, though the testimonials in prose were innumerable—

" My heart has thanked thee, Bowles! for those soft strains,
Whose sadness soothes me, like the murmuring
Of wild bees in the sunny hours of spring."

This was a just tribute to the pathos which also informed the poet's effusions, when tender emotions and tears were called for. Not unlike Cowper on many points, he was, perhaps, his superior in this respect; and although, unfortunately, the proof is lost, (probably never to be recovered,) I can vouch for his production of at least one humorous piece that was worthy to go to futurity in company with the renowned John Gilpin. On his visits to town from Wiltshire, Mr. Bowles was in the habit of sleeping at a bookseller's in Piccadilly; but, on arriving one evening late and unexpectedly, he found his usual accommodation forestalled. He was consequently transferred for the night to a mantua-maker's in Wigmore Street, and a comfortable bed made up for him in the airy apartment where her fashionable dresses were liberally exposed to view. Was it extraordinary that the poet should have a perturbed sleep? His weary eyelids might close, but his imagination could not be laid to rest, and in the morning he embodied his dreams in verse. The manuscript was given to me, and I very sincerely lament has disappeared from my possession, for it was as lively, animated, and amusing a production of its class as I ever saw. Only think of all the different and delicate articles of attire becoming instinct with life, leaping from their *dummies*, and dancing before the captivated eyes of the bewildered bard! of petticoats, and tuckers, and jupons, and what not: none who did not, like Tam o' Shanter, see the bewitchings in action can tell the pirouettes and vagaries. Poor Bowles declared he would not try to sleep in a fashionable milliner's show-room again, for the value of the richest dress that made its approaches to him on that eventful occasion.

The rectory-house of Bremhill was a sweet and delightful spot. Nowhere could the help of the poor, or the education of the young, be more religiously and sedulously attended to. On a sunny summer day it looked like an Eden; and the agreeable manners and intellectual intercourse that reigned within were of a description not easily to be equalled. The playfulness of the rector was not its least amusing feature; and when occasionally heightened by the effect of some momentary fit of abstraction, or ludicrous *contretemps*, the cheery laugh rang loud and long in the peaceful mansion

of the unconscious divine; it was sometimes like Lord Dudley's "Thinking Aloud."

I remember, one Saturday evening, when Dr. Croly had joined me in a visit to Bremhill, and had undertaken to preach in the parish church on the ensuing day, our host (whose own style was remarkable for its simplicity as Croly's was for powerful eloquence,) woke up, as it were, from a dream, and addressed me: "I hope your friend will not preach to the Marquis to-morrow, but to the peasantry." The hint, however, was not lost, for, though the neighbour Marquis and Marchioness of Lansdowne were present, the preacher delivered one of the most pastoral and beautiful discourses I ever heard from any pulpit, alike instructive to peer and ploughman. The vicinity of Bowood, the Marquis's seat, and latterly Slopperton, where the lyrist Moore, in failing health, exhaled his parting breath, oblivious of song, rendered the society met at Bremhill very captivating, from its special varieties in character and the high intellectual tone which predominated over the whole. Great knowledge of life, scholarly attainments, genius, and general talent were recognised for the select admission, and, happily mingled in easy informal intercourse, left impressions upon every mind, the pleasure and instruction of which could hardly be forgotten. The admirable educational and industrial schools, supported and superintended by the marchioness and the excellent pastor's wife, Mrs. Bowles, were not the least gratifying features in this delightful scene of serenity, benevolence, and righteous feeling towards earth and heaven.

As a poet, I may remark, Bowles belonged immediately to the pre-sensation epoch. Finely sensitive to moral beauties, a touching tenderness, often gliding (as in all truly feeling human hearts observant of social life it will glide) into tones of pity and pathos, breathed through all his productions, and was couched in language exquisitely simple and natural. Hardly one of his many sonnets might not be quoted in proof of these admirable qualities, which recommended them at once to the taste and judgment of the most critical, and to wide-spread popular appreciation. That they inspired a succession of delightful writers I have already noticed; but I will add that not one surpassed, if any equalled, the original in his compassionate conceptions of humanity and the genial expression of his ideas. Kindness and sympathy filled his soul with high imagining, but nevertheless found utterance in the most delicate allusions. His pictures, or rather his sketches, resembled the finest water-colour painting—no daubing, no strengthening with bits of foreign character, but all pure, harmonious, and complete—"when unadorned, adorned the most." I will open his volume—would it were opened and studied as much as it deserves—and adopt the first example. It is a sonnet, written at Ostend, in 1797—hark!

" How sweet the tuneful bells responsive peal!

• • • • •
They fling their melancholy music wide,
Bidding me many a tender thought recall
Of summer days, and those delightful years

When by my native stream, in life's fair prime,
The mournful music of their mingled chime
First waked my wondering childhood into tears!
But seeming now, when all those days are o'er,
The sounds of joy once heard, and heard no more."

Or take the closing lines of a poem on "Silchester, the ancient Roman city of Caleva":—

" Lone city of the dead! thy pride is past,
Thy temples sunk, as at the whirlwind's blast!
Silent—all silent, where the mingling cries
Of gathered myriads rent the purple skies!
Here—where the summer breezes wave the wood,
The stern and silent gladiator stood,
And listened to the shouts that hailed his gushing blood;

And on this wooded mount, that oft of yore
Hath echoed to the Lybian lion's roar,
The ear scarce catches, from the shady glen,
The small pipe of the solitary wren."

I know not what readers of our day may think of such themes; but to my mind, the turn of the sentiment is indescribably sweet and true to nature; and not the less affecting, because it is as gentle as it is true. But everywhere similar elements of kindly sentiment are evolved with similar grace, and frequently with greater force, when the subject elicits greater intensity, and the more placid elucidation yields to the fervidness of genius.

In 1855 an edition of his collected works was published (Nichol, Edinburgh) by the Rev. George Gilfillan, who considers Bowles "the father of the modern school of English poetry." His first poetical publication, consisting of sonnets, appeared in 1789. From that time a number of poems appeared in rapid succession, of which the most popular were "Coomber Ellen and St. Michael's Mount;" "The Sorrows of Switzerland;" "The Spirit of Discovery;" "The Missionary of the Andes;" and, in 1837, his last volume, "Scenes and Shadows of Days departed." He died at Salisbury in 1850, aged eighty-eight years.

REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTERS OF THE RENAISSANCE.

v.—VERGERIO.

RELIGION was the pivot of the world's history during the sixteenth century. Every great movement of nations or autocrats, for that period, depended mainly on theologic questions; while into petty communities, into the life of the college and the family, the same considerations entered more pervasively than at any subsequent period. The convulsions of peoples were repeated on smaller scale in every town where the conflicting creeds had representatives; nay, in every social circle the battle of Truth against Error was being waged; and self-denying men were found to give up worldly honours and wealth—in some instances to descend from high position to the life of exiled outcasts—all for the sake of Him whom they felt to be their Saviour and Master.

Foremost in the noble band of such true converts stands the stately figure of Pierpaolo Vergerio, drest in bishop's rochet and legate's purple. Strange vicissitude, chiefly of his own making, attended his career. There is a wide difference, in the world's eye, between the prelate governing the diocese of Istria, and bidding fair for a cardinalate, and the humble serge-clad pastor of a congregation of exiled Italians among the passes of the Grisons. Vergerio took the step of this great descent knowingly and voluntarily. Verily he has had his reward for nigh three hundred years, in the joy of his Lord.

About 1504 he was born at Capo d'Istria, on the Gulf of Venice, in a province considered Italian, though by physical boundaries of sea and mountain set apart from the peninsula, and more properly tacked on to Austrian or Turkish territory. The enterprising republic of Venice ruled over it when Vergerio was growing up; and at the Venetian University of Padua he completed his education, taking the degree of Doctor of Civil Law; after which he stepped from the pupil's bench to the teacher's chair, with scarcely a pause, lecturing with much success for some years as a Professor.

Probably it was this immediate appointment to a professorship which prevented his going to the University of Wittenberg, as had been his intention, in order to study under Melanchthon and the other learned men who

taught there. How such a course might have precipitated events, and altered the tenor of Vergerio's life, can only be guess-work now. About this time he was employed to collect relics for the Elector Frederick of Saxony, with a view to the enrichment of the collegiate church at Wittenberg: but the enlightenment of the people had preceded that of the prince, thanks to Luther's "Prelections;" and when the relics duly arrived, it was found that nobody would reverence them. They were sent back to Italy to be sold for what price they would bring; and Vergerio purchased no more.

His duties as lecturer seemed to have waked within him, into conscious exercise, a very considerable talent as orator. The ranks of the church were the fittest sphere for this gift; and ere long we find him Vicar to the Podesta—whatever office that may mean—and subsequently attracting crowds to the Venetian churches by his eloquence. Presently his repute reached Rome; Pope Clement VII desired to see him. Wise in his generation, this second Medicean pontiff knew the importance of enlisting all the talent he could command against the perilous new opinions; there was a mission of especial delicacy, requiring much tact and ability, to be fulfilled at the German court just then; and he found the qualities he needed in his ambassador, embodied in the youthful student of Padua. When twenty-six years old, Vergerio proceeded to the capital of Ferdinand, King of the Romans, as Papal Legate.

His instructions were briefly these: to oppose the Reformers by all means in his power; and especially to prevent the calling of a general council, for which the uninitiated and sincere on both sides clamoured. Of course it would not do openly to refuse the council. Finesse and artifice must be used—a show of compliance, covering an impossibility of agreement upon details. Vergerio did it all well, so as to earn the thanks of the succeeding Pope Paul III, who called him back to Italy for consultation, and then renewed his legatine commission. The old crafty policy was to be continued—the greatest openness and simplicity on the surface—the deepest double-dealing beneath. Above all things, the odium of not holding the council must be made to fall on the reformed party, by proposing conditions to which they never could consent. Paul pretended to be anxious for a council: nothing could better please his paternal heart, rent with the sore schisms of Christendom; but he thought the very best place for the meeting of such council would be Mantua in Lombardy, so central and convenient for all parties: ay, and so near the papal power that a long arm could seize the chief protestants any day, and consign them to the *oubliettes* of the Inquisition. This insidious offer of Mantua as the rendezvous held the council question at bay for some years, even after Vergerio had withdrawn from Ferdinand's court; but fortunately some of the serpent's wisdom was displayed by the Reformers.

Another job committed to him was to tamper secretly with Luther and Melanchthon, and endeavour to bribe them back into Romanism. Paul III, a thorough worldling, could not believe but that all men had their price, even in the sacredest matters. To Wittenberg travelled the legate, armed with the amplest promises wherewith to sieve and sap the virtue of the sturdy Saxon monk. But Luther was founded upon a rock; and Vergerio, perhaps for the first time, beheld face to face a man utterly unassailable by flattery or by the seductions of earthly greatness. The lesson must have had its effect, and probably caused the legate to ask himself what new power of principle was this, which rendered a man's soul invulnerable to ordinary temptations.

Though unsuccessful thus far, Vergerio's immediate recompence was bestowed on him in the shape of the bishopric of Mondrusium, in Croatia: which diocese he does not seem much to have admired, for he writes:—“She is a spouse which may be either repudiated or changed.” Of honestly doing his duty by her he seems to have not thought. Shortly afterwards he was advanced to the higher see of Capo d'Istria, his birthplace.

In 1541 we find him at the celebrated Diet of Worms, professedly as representative of the king of France, but secretly bearing instructions from the Pope. Again his cue was to impede the projected general council. To this end he made an oration on the unity of the church, which was printed after being spoken. Chiefly by his means the conference at Worms was broken up and came to nought; state craft triumphed once more.

And now for a red hat for the successful man who had so well served his master: certainly he had earned it, to all appearance. But Paul had heard certain whispers against the orthodoxy of his late legate, and wished not to elevate any more such cardinals as Contarini and Fregoso—men too pure for their position. Vergerio had been unduly familiar with the German heretics; he had spoken well of them; he had portraits of certain Lutherans in his house; he had favoured the cause of some accused of heterodoxy. The Pope was injudicious enough to show him some tokens of displeasure. Whereas the cardinal's purple would probably have bound him for ever to Rome, the coldness of his master deepened the work of detachment which was just beginning. He withdrew to his diocese, disappointed and chagrined.

But he would now accomplish an act that should prove beyond doubt how groundless was papal suspicion, and how the items of previous conduct which were magnified into accusation, were merely the offspring of a certain liberality of feeling, graceful in a man of letters towards brethren of his guild of learning. He took up his pen, and began a work entitled, “Against the Apostates of Germany.” It was to be a most triumphant refutation of Luther, Melanchthon, Ecolampade: it was to establish his own orthodoxy beyond doubt, and to deal destruction on the fabric of the Reformation.

Of course he was compelled to read closely and carefully the books he would refute, and examine into the scriptural authorities cited. At what epoch of the investigation light began to dawn upon his soul, we know not. First, the refutation seemed more difficult than he expected, and afterwards he found that it was impossible. He laid down his pen and took to his knees.

God converted him. The gospel of the grace of Christ penetrated his soul, and the whole world appeared in a new light. He must tell of the wonderful good tidings to somebody else; he went to visit his brother, bishop of the next diocese, of Pola, and revealed to him the state of his mind: how, step by step, he had been led through a wilderness of doubt to the conviction of justification by faith in Christ only. The Bishop of Pola was startled and distressed at the disclosure: but Pierpaolo never left him till he also was convinced and converted; and then the brothers made plans for evangelizing their dioceses. With such success did they preach and teach, and organize instruction for the people, that multitudes became obedient to the faith; and in 1546, when Annibale Grisone was sent inquisitor into Istria, he found the region a very hotbed of heresy.

Vergerio had sought no further for the honours or glories of this world. To do his duty in publishing the great salvation became the passion of his life. The visit of the inquisitor put a stop to one phase of his

influence. It had happened that harvests had been bad in Istria for a little time back; olive trees and vineyards had yielded scant fruit, and pestilence had smitten the cattle. The inquisitor proclaimed that these calamities were the result of Heaven's vengeance on the heresy of the land. He caused the papal bull to be published everywhere, requiring all persons to inform against heretics, and to give up prohibited books. Fire and sword were denounced on the contumacious, and the heaviest penalties attached to the reading of the New Testament. A reign of terror began, and no man felt himself secure with friend or neighbour. This tremendous new power, quite over-riding all other authority, civil or ecclesiastical, struck fear into the most steadfast heart. But Vergerio stood firm: he must be rooted away.

On one high festival day, the inquisitor ascended the pulpit in the cathedral of Capo d'Istria. After a harangue artfully contrived to direct popular rage and fanaticism upon the Bishop, he ended with the pithy suggestion that it would be well to stone him and the other heretics who had drawn a curse upon their country. The excitable mob would have followed his advice, could they have laid hands on Vergerio; but he had withdrawn, and returned no more to his diocese.

The Bishop of Pola had a closer body of adherents, and was protected by them against the open vengeance of his enemies. Rome had other means than public violence for ridding herself of an obnoxious prelate: Vergerio's brother was found dead in his own palace, without assignable cause but poison.

The Council of Trent was just then sitting: the fugitive Vergerio appeared there, as some say with a view of self-vindication—as others say, to demand his episcopal seat in the assembly. The Pope would fain have arrested him, but knew that any such step would be a tacit denial of the thorough freedom which he was anxious to convince the German protestants existed at Trent. To remove him from the locality, however, the trial of the charges against him was remitted to the patriarch and nuncio at Venice. For two years the process was conducted, and skilfully battled with by Vergerio's learned defences: the final sentence was, that he was forbidden ever to return to his diocese.

For the present, he retreated to Padua, the scene of his old university successes; and here occurred one of the most striking episodes of the Italian Reformation. Any reader of ecclesiastical history has heard of Francisco Spira the apostate—he whose fearful deathbed stands out from all others as the realization of spiritual horror. A lawyer of Padua, with large learning and abilities, he had been converted to the true faith of Christ some six years before, and upheld it with might and main, sparing not purse nor influence, nor individual advocacy; not deterred by obloquy or danger, until the Venetian legate formally requested the senate to put an end to the audacious heretic, and Spira was called on to recant, or—suffer as he deserved.

Eleven children, and the natural love of life, proved strong arguments to the former course. After a fearful struggle with conscience, he signed the paper drawn up by the legate; declaring his grief for his protestant opinions, and beseeching pardon for past offences. He was directed to read this aloud after mass, in the church of his native place. Such was the misery of his mind, that he fainted when he had finished it, in presence of two thousand people. Thenceforward continued an intensity of mental anguish, of which biography gives but few examples. He could dwell upon nothing but the horrors of the hell to which he considered himself doomed

as an apostate. He sank into a melancholy which was declared to be insanity, but through which he abided most miserably sane. He was brought to Padua for the best medical advice in all Italy, but spiritual or physical doctors could do nothing for him. A burning thirst, a slow fire of fever, consumed his body, yet he obstinately rejected cooling draughts, or any semblance of nutriment. If asked the cause of his malady, he would detail his apostasy, and declare that his sins had been greater than the mercy of God, for he had denied Christ of his own will, and Christ could allow him no hope now.

Vergerio was one of his frequent visitors; but he could do little for the victim of despair. All his representations of the love of God, and the finished work of the Lord Jesus, were met by the one assertion of damnation. The awful scene was blessed to his soul. "To tell the truth," he writes subsequently, "I felt such a flame in my breast, that I could scarce restrain myself at times from going to the chamber door of the Venetian legate and crying out, 'Here I am: where are your prisons and your fires? Satisfy your utmost desire upon me; burn me for the cause of Christ, I beseech you.'"

Thenceforward Vergerio was thoroughly decided. He had seen that there were worse things than worldly discredit and poverty, and physical suffering. Surely the prolonged agonies of body and soul endured by Spira were more fearful than exile or the stake. Now, he could give up everything for his Saviour's sake; he left Padua, and retired into the country of the Grisons, a protestant portion of the Swiss League, where he was called to the pastorate of a little town named Vico Soprano, and joyfully undertook the office, at the magnificent yearly stipend of 150 crowns.

Meanwhile, his enemies pretended that he was meditating an invasion of his old diocese, with a view to forcible possession of his lost dignity. From his retreat amid the mighty mountains, he wrote a defence addressed to the doge of Venice. He travelled about a good deal through neighbouring territories, especially in the Valteline. Perhaps episcopal habits of superiority were strong in him still, and his eloquence and learning, together with his late high position, gave him a certain influence over the republican pastors of his neighbourhood, though without recognised authority. In one of these preaching tours he stopped a night at a certain town, the parish priest of which had died that same day. In the evening the chief inhabitants assembled at the inn, to talk over their choice of a successor. "Come," said the strange Italian traveller, "will you not hear a sermon from me?" And so delighted were the audience, that they insisted on his preaching again to them before he left; and his subject was that key-note of the Reformation, full pardon through faith in Christ only. Soon after, it spread abroad that in that little town of Pontresina the mass had been abolished, and a protestant ministry set up. The seed sown by Vergerio's two sermons had fructified.

Another testimony to the convincing power of the ex-legate's eloquence is, that, preaching once in a certain place, the images in the chief church were all thrown down during the following night. A similar result followed a similar occasion elsewhere. So much was his influence dreaded, that at last a deputation of Roman Catholics waited on the governor of the Valteline, and demanded Vergerio's banishment, or they would not be answerable for the consequences. The Bishop understood the hint, and withdrew to safer soil. Before this, a papal nuncio had come from Italy to tempt him, as he had formerly himself been the agent to tempt Luther, and with similar success. Vergerio had worn all but the highest

honours of Rome, and knew the hollowness of earthly glory; no further temptation for him, lay in mitre or scarlet hat.

His brethren in the Swiss churches hardly appreciated the man they had got among them, in some instances. He was accused of wanting to foist an unrecognised episcopacy upon the Helvetic pastors, and of having more policy and finesse in his conduct than was consistent with the simplicity of ministerial life. What spots on the sun were these! He had been the noblest example in the century of giving up all for his faith: Romish bishops are not easily moved from their thrones by a principle. Nevertheless, whatever uncomfortable state of feeling was engendered, caused him to leave Switzerland altogether; he retired to Tubingen, in the duchy of Wirtemberg, and died there in 1565.

His mortal life had nobly acted out the lesson which we in these modern times do so need to learn—duty before interest—the faith and the love of Christ before all things!

A PAGE IN THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE GREAT SAHARA.

THE capture of the ostrich, (we are told by Mr. Tristram, in his interesting book on the Sahara,) is the greatest feat of hunting to which the Saharan sportsman aspires, and in richness of booty it ranks next to the plunder of a caravan. So great is the cost and toil of the chase, that it is generally estimated the capture of an ostrich cannot be effected without the loss of a horse or two. So wary is the bird, and so vast are the plains over which it roams, that no artifices or ambuscades can be of any avail. The only resource is to pursue them with dogged perseverance, and for this work the poor horses have to undergo a long and painful training. The North African ostrich is less gregarious than that of the Cape, generally living in companies of from four to six individuals, which do not appear to be in the habit, under ordinary circumstances, of wandering more than twenty or thirty miles from their head-quarters. A skin in full plumage is worth from forty to a hundred Spanish dollars.

"Once and once only," says Mr. Tristram, "I had the good fortune to take an ostrich's nest, though fresh eggs were not unfrequently brought in by the Arabs. It was some months subsequent to this occasion, when we observed with our telescopes two birds standing for some time in the same spot, and were induced to ride towards them. They rapidly scuttled off, but on intersecting their track, we turned back and retraced it, instead of continuing a vain pursuit. An ostrich's track is by no means easy either to follow or to retrace, for his stride measures, at full speed, from twenty-two to twenty-eight feet, and the oblong impression of two toes at such wide intervals, affords no very evident 'spoor' to any eyes less expert than those of a Bedouin huntsman. We retraced the impressions to the spot where we had seen the birds standing together, and where the sand was well trodden down. Two Arabs, at once dismounting, began to dig with their hands, and presently brought up four fine fresh eggs from the depth of about a foot under the warm sand. They are excellent eating, and cannot be distinguished from hens' eggs in flavour. Ostrich egg omelet we always found a most welcome addition to our desert bill of fare, and a convenient and portable provision, for, from the thickness of the shell, the eggs keep perfectly sweet and fresh for a fortnight or three weeks."

On another occasion the travellers saw six ostriches, and after using their telescopes, made them out, but at a great distance. Of course the Arabs galloped wildly in



pursuit, though, unsuccessful as usual, they returned in an hour or two. There is something apparently irresistible to the nomad in the charm of an ostrich hunt, and often as the exhausted horses had vainly suffered in the toilsome pursuit, there was no restraining their attendants, when the alarm was given, from scampering wildly over the plains. The most skilful sportsmen generally adopt the plan of sending two or three hunters to follow the herd at a gentle gallop, endeavouring only to keep the birds in sight without alarming them, when they would take to their full speed and be speedily lost to view. In the meantime the rest of the party proceed in a direction at right angles to the course the ostriches have taken, knowing by experience their habit of coursing in a circle. Their object is to intersect the path of their game, and for this purpose they post themselves on the best lookout they can find, and await for hours in patience. If fortunate enough to detect them, they follow their now exhausted flock, and often succeed in running down one or more, though almost invariably some of the horses fall exhausted in the pursuit. When overtaken, the bird offers no resistance beyond kicking out sideways. How very striking is the fact that the patriarch Job, in his pictorial description of the ostrich, has selected precisely the three most characteristic features of the bird—its feathers, ("Gavest thou feathers to the ostrich?")—its manner of hatching its eggs, ("She leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust")—and its swiftness, ("What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.")

LONDON SCHOOL TREATS.*

The Annual Treat has now become quite an educational institution. The day is prized in the future and in retrospect. The children, with a delicious rejection of all responsibility, magnify the arduousness and specialities of the excursion as the day approaches, and when it has passed recount their extravagance and feats with slowly fading interest throughout the remainder of the summer. The anxious manager, too, thinks quite as much of the business as the most heedless little trot; he dreads the coming possibilities of accident, and no one walks off with more relief than he when the day is over, and the twenty van loads of scatterbrained children have been safely emptied into the street by the school, without fracture or loss. It may seem an easy thing, with all the appliances of London, to take from five hundred to one thousand children for a day into the country; but you must not forget that there can be no rehearsal of the proceedings, no preparatory march out, no previous drill. The strong influence which accompanies the present educational system is nowhere more shown than in the power of ordinary every-day discipline to control the child regiment on its one unpractised field day. True, there are accidents, not unfrequently, but the marvel is, there are not more. The exuberance of the children's pleasure comes from the consciousness not only of a holiday, but a holiday as a school, all together, in the country. It is the very nick and crisis of the summer's joy. All provokes amusement. The master smiles, the teachers play. The monitors romp. What wonder that Tommy sprains his ankle among the hundreds thus suddenly plunged into the very opposite of their daily life? The way in which children delight in running risks is occasionally even absurd, however provoking. Some years ago, I gave about four hundred children an excur-

sion to Ealing. We were to play and feast in a big hay field safely hedged, and studded with large shadow-casting trees. We went in vans, and drove into the meadow at once—so as not to run the risk of losing children by unloading on the common. There were several animals being taken out of the field as we drove in. Well, the first thing that the first boy did who got off the foremost van, was to pull the tail of the nearest horse. Of course he was kicked down, but, having happened to single out a rheumatic old mare, and having run right upon her hocks, he was simply laid on his back, without being hurt. He could hardly, however, have made speedier arrangements for a serious accident. Sometimes children who have been used to back streets and alleys all their lives, are quite bewildered with their first excursion, and cannot get fairly to play for some time. I remember once taking a number of such poor inexperienced little boys to Hampton Court. It was too much for many of them. A few were stupefied, others ran wild. I never had such a day. The children were mostly strange to me, but I directed the entertainment as the giver of it. Had I not marked each boy with a red calico rosette, I should have lost ever so many among the other schools which were there. We got off very well on the whole, but I was horrified once at finding one fry of urchins bathing in an ornamental basin among the gold fish. Another unintentionally killed a duck with a horse chesnut, which hit him on the back of the head, etc., etc. However, they were very merry, poor little fellows, and the affair of the duck happily came to nothing. I suppose the guardians considered it accidental death, which it really was. I should remark in passing, that the performances of that day were quite exceptional, for, having assisted at or superintended many school treats, I must bear witness to the remarkably good behaviour and obedience of the children in our National Schools at their annual excursions.

But let me say a word about the kind of treat which is most liked. It should not be too stiff nor instructive. There should be plenty of running about; a processional excursion loses half its relish. The best place is a large field, with plenty of grass, shade, and liberty within certain boundaries. The commander-in-chief, knowing that children will spend money, should be careful to make an arrangement with the pedlars and donkey boys, who always scent out a school excursion, and present themselves on the ground directly the children come—in most cases fleecing them at once. There should be a regular tariff of prices, or children will pay anything in the first demand for a ride or a swing. It is well, too, to provide a choice of goods and amusements. This divides and protects the children. For several years I have arranged beforehand for the presence of donkeys, swings, knock'emdowns, print-sellers, archery, etc., etc., at a certain price. A photographic tent, too, with like-nesses at fourpence a-head, frames included, is very popular. Any one taking a large school out of London would find this much appreciated. It is better than fruit. There is something to show, and no stomach-ache involved in it. There are itinerant artists who are glad of the chance.

At any rate, let there be something cheap and wholesome which the children can buy, and, whatever is omitted, be sure you get some donkeys. A penny a ride is generally the price, but the men will often neutralize the arrangement unless you settle how long the "ride" is to be. I always take a policeman with me, and bargain with the owner of the donkeys before him and the children. "From one tree to the corner of the field, and back for a penny." "Very well, sir," says the

* For this paper we are indebted to a London clergyman who is very successful in his management of the schools of his parish.

master of the obstinate stud. The children all catch the price, screaming in chorus, "The corner of the field and back for a penny." The next moment they secure every donkey, and set off with more enthusiasm than the steeds they bestride. I have known quite expensive excursions comparatively fail for lack of donkeys. Swings, too, are invaluable; if you really wish the children to enjoy themselves, you should have several of them. A solitary swing is a centre of strife. There should be a small one for the little children alone.

There is a considerable choice of places to go to in the neighbourhood of London. The great thing is to have it as countryified as possible, and yet with available shelter. This last can often be provided by a rick-cloth, which is much cheaper than a tent, and will cover a host of children. If you can get a good field, with a rick-cloth, donkeys, swings, and other attractions of the sort, ordered for the occasion, you can generally combine all the charms of the so-called "tea-garden" without its attendant drawbacks. The Crystal Palace is too stiff for downright play. Many pleasure-grounds are too ill-conducted. A field with extemporized shelter, and selected camp-followers, is the thing. But suppose you have fixed upon the place, and have not decided how to go there. Take my advice, and get vans. They take a long time on the journey, which is half the fun; they carry the children from the door of the school where they assemble, right into the field where they play. They are ready to go or return at your own hour. Any railway, on the contrary, involves four marches—one to the station in the morning, then one to the field; another back to the station, when the day's play is over, and, worst of all, another from the station home, perhaps through crowded streets at night. There are too many musterings, and the journey itself is much too short. It is over directly, whereas a drive in vans of some only six miles is quite a long business. Choose a flat road if you employ vans, or the price of them will be much increased. You ought to get twenty vans for a guinea a piece for a day, supposing you go only six or seven miles out of town. Any gratuity to the drivers should be made to depend upon their behaviour, for they are a thirsty race. It is not a bad plan to give them all tea after the children; it keeps them together, and weakens their excuse for drinking at the nearest public house. They always take it as a kindness, and it costs very little.

A word about the packing of vans. The children should be made into companies of from thirty to forty, according to their size. It is advisable to put those which know each other best together; which is done by making the companies out of the contiguous school classes. Each company should have a number known to the children and the driver of their van. Thus, when the day's amusement is over, and the horses are standing harnessed ready to return, there ought to be no confusion. The master, having assembled the children, says, "Now then, No. 1." Up drives No. 1, and those who belong to No. 1 company get in; thus the whole are soon seated; all rush and scrambling is avoided. There ought to be two teachers or seniors with each van, and a policeman on the last.

Now about provisions. If your funds are limited, don't attempt a dinner. Let the children bring some with them. Give them a hearty tea between three and four o'clock, and a bun a-piece, with milk and water at last. I have known schools where everything was provided free, except dinner, and that the children paid some trifles for. The consequence was, that the excursion ceased to be a "treat," and the parents, if not the children, grumbled at any failure or omission, as unjust.

There are three ways to cater on these occasions. 1st. You can carry everything with you, and make your own tea. 2nd. You can find some respectable innkeeper near your field to prepare for you. 3rd. You can get the whole thing done by a contractor from town. There are persons, such as Mr. Earle, in the Hackney Road, who would provide for an excursion of thousands at a few days' notice, and at almost any scale of prices you choose. This saves a vast deal of trouble. The country landlord is seldom experienced in the sort of thing you want; your own commissariat is liable to break down. You forget the knives, the butter, the sugar, or some item which affects the success of the whole affair. A contractor is the best. You can calculate the cost to a penny, and be quite easy about having what you want.

There is a subsidiary treat which many schools within a decent walk of Kensington Gardens might get up, which is very successful and cheap. The most retired part of the gardens are sure to be new to the children. You hardly ever see anybody there. I have witnessed several famous extemporized treats, by taking the whole school to a pleasant open spot among the trees to the north of the round pond. If you speak to a park-keeper he will see that no undesirable people come to interfere with your play. This excursion, too, teaches people to make use of the fresh air and quiet within their reach. The present retirement of some part of the gardens, off the great lines of thoroughfare, is most remarkable. I sat on a bench there one day, for half an hour, without seeing a soul except at a distance, and then I left without being interrupted. Birds were singing in the trees, two or three gardeners belonging to the palace were potting some plants, about fifty yards off, and the only sign of London, beyond the faint hum of distant traffic, was a stray policeman; but he was smoking a pipe.

I always pity the children of the infant school on the day of the annual excursion. You must draw the line somewhere. You can't take them. We always have a little appendix or postscript of a "treat" for these, about a week after the great affair. It really can consist of nothing but tea, and play in the school-room; but a few shillings' worth of penny German toys are of priceless value. Imagination does a good deal to give the whole thing a festive character; the chief gratification, however, consists of unlimited noise, and romping in rooms where they are at other times taught to behave quietly.

The character of a school is more affected than many people think by its treats. Those who see the train of vans, full of children, setting out some bright midsummer day, or hear the chorus of little voices as they come cheering back at night, sometimes little suspect the anxiety and enjoyment involved in that one day excursion. It is the main theme of some back dingy streets where hundreds watch the weather with kind interest, and quite a crowd awaits the return of the cavalcade. Here they are! is the cry, as the first van comes round the corner, and the children are soon claimed by parents, and fast asleep, dreaming of the real buttercups and daisies of the clean country meadow where they have spent at least a day, clear of the smoky, dirty town.

BETTWS-Y-COED AND ITS ARTIST LIFE. III.

The small farms and cottages on the hills and mountains about Bettws are extremely picturesque, with the wild flowers growing among the slates, which, held down by large stones, usually form their roofs. The walls, too, are mostly made of large rounded stones, cut roughly from the mountain crags, and having the interstices filled

with moss, though they are sometimes plastered. Talk of interiors: few interiors are more interesting than those of these mountain dwellings. Their walls are sometimes three feet thick; strength is needed to render them safe, amid the gusts and stormy winds and pouring rains which must assail them. Within these cottages there prevails a dim mysterious twilight, through which come gleams of light from the open door or small windows, producing most curious effects of light and shadow; resting sometimes on the prominent features of the cottager, and strangely relieving the broad deep shadows which darken beneath his wide-brimmed hat. These cottages have generally two rooms, the upper one being reached from the lower by a ladder. The great elevation of their site renders them very cold in the winter, and the people generally keep large fires on the hearth, made by wood and peat—for they say that a fire on the hearth warms the place much more thoroughly than a fire in the stove; and when these mountain people come down into the cottages of Bettws, they complain sadly of the lesser fires which are burned there. The cottage walls often admit much air through the crevices, and it is well that they do so, for ventilation is very little provided for by any other means.

Pictures of the interiors of Welsh cottages are often to be seen at our various exhibitions of paintings; but rarely do we chance to see these giving the full depth of the darkness common in these mountain homes. "The inside of these houses are not really so dark as they seem," said a young artist. It is the contrast with the bright light of the out-of-doors which makes them seem so. When the eye becomes used to the interior of the house, we can see much better than at first. If it were not so, how could we paint them? Difficult indeed is it to paint depth of darkness, without losing the colours, though in fact the places are more picturesque and quite as truthful delineations, when they are painted as they seem, rather than as they really are. The inhabitants of these cottages generally have a little land and garden, often a few cattle or sheep, on which they employ their time; and the women, like some in the village, are occupied in knitting stockings, or spinning woollen yarn; for the spinning-wheel is not yet banished from the cottage doors of the villages of North Wales, and a ready market is found at Llanrwst for these home-spun materials, or for knitted stockings.

Some of our party who were botanists, were a little disappointed at not finding a greater number of botanical treasures in rare flowers—not that Bettws is by any means wanting in lovely floral adornments, but that it offers less of rarity than many spots not a short distance from it. Everywhere we found a little flower which is not commonly distributed in England, but which in this neighbourhood revels wherever the land is moist. This is the pretty ivy-leaved campanula, whose small but elegant blue bell would scarcely give shelter to a bee in a shower; and the wall pennywort and the English stonecrop, by no means universally distributed in England, are everywhere here, on rocks and stones. Cotton-grasses wave in snowy silky tufts on the numerous bogs; and the boy myrtle, which the Welsh call courlie, gives out its scent as the foot crushes it. In the lakes on the mountains we found the blue lobelia, and amid the bog-mosses on their margin, the handsome drooping flower of the common butterwort grew among the yellow spikes of the bog-asphodel, and the wax-like tufts of the cross-leaved heath, and the small pinkish red flower of the bog-pimpernel. Wild raspberries and whortle bushes grew in plenty, and their fruits were continually brought into

the village to be used for tarts. At the distance of a morning's ride, plants of great rarity were, however, to be seen: the yellow Welsh poppy; the yellow globe ranunculus, common in English gardens; various rare species of saxifrage; the alpine meadow rue; the dark dingy purple flowers of the water avens, and the mountain sorrel, with its acid kidney-shaped leaves; while the rose-root, with its small yellow flowers, is abundant on the wet rocks, and its long thick woody root, sweet in odour, as the richest garden rose, retaining its scent for weeks.

Ferns lay by our way in every walk, and some rare ones occur in the neighbourhood. Mountain male and lady ferns, polypody, brake, and northern fern, are in every wood and lane; and wall rue and maiden hair spleenwort, and black stalked spleenwort, were common here as in many places, while the rarer green spleenwort with its green stalk, grew on the wet rocks about the neighbourhood; and the pale mountain fern, or beech fern, as it is often called, was common here in the woods, and the rarer three-branched polypody grew by the Swallow Falls, as in various other localities. The parsley fern grows among the loose stones of Helen's Bridge, a little way out of the village; the Tunbridge filmy fern, on several wet rocks, and the scaly spleenwort on walls on the road to Llanrwst. Snowdon and its range of mountains is famous for its ferns and club-mosses, as well as for several rare mountain flowers.

Every rock that rose above the waters, every clump of stone by the way-side, is so rich in lichens, that they added very much to the beauty of colour around. Sometimes they were of rich russet brown; or again, one might think that powdered gold had been scattered over a crimson surface. Now they formed large sulphur-coloured masses, or were rich in every tint of deeper yellow, orange, or green. Sometimes they were like glossy threads of silk, or small patches of satin; others were rough and powdered. Larger kinds lay clasping the stones, in leaf-like forms, with jagged edges, their rich dark olive tint turned up with pale silvery grey. One common lichen looked like a number of silver shields, cast here and there upon the rocks. Its grey round or oblong crust was dotted at the centre with opaque white spots, and rimmed with a thick white edge. We used to think, as we looked at these and their companions, the soft green mosses, of what Ruskin has said of these. "Unfading as motionless, the worm frets them not, and the autumn wastes not. Strong in lowness, they neither blanch in heat nor pine in frost. To them, slow-fingered, constant-hearted, is intrusted the weaving of the dark eternal tapestries of the hills; to them, slow-pencilled, iris-dyed, the tender framing of their endless imagery. Sharing the stillness of the unimpassioned rock, they share also its endurance; and while the whirls of departing spring scatter the white hawthorn blossom like drifted snow, and summer dims over the parched meadow, the drooping of the cowslip gold, far above among the mountains, the silver lichen spots rest star-like on the stone, and the gathering orange stain upon the edge of yonder western peak, reflects the sunset of a thousand years."

When first I saw these lichens and delighted in their beauty of colour, it seemed to me that they would add much to the beauty of an artist's picture. But after all, these little patches form so small a portion of the walls, or trees, or mountains which they invest, that when any attempt was made to portray them in detail, in a landscape picture, the greatest skill and judgment were needed to prevent their looking like little blotches; and they too often gave the effect of hardness. Indeed, few but inexperienced artists attempted to give them in

detail. For the photographic landscapes they became positive defects, for the little white spots which they left on the dark rocks, served only to convey the impression that the paper was defective.

Many tourists call at Bettws-y-Coed, spending an hour or two there, on their way to other places; and often we were asked to tell them in what direction they would find the chief beauties of a place now so well known as remarkable for its scenery. This question would often perplex us; for though even a glance at the village and the rivers and mountains about it would please and interest, yet it needs a stay there to get a true idea of the wondrous beauty of its surroundings. Tourists always walked straight off to Pont-y-Pair, where they were quite sure to see one lovely spot, and where the true lovers of nature often felt so charmed that they scarcely went further. Perhaps the scenery about Pandy Mills, at a walk of about three miles from the village, is the most picturesque spot in the neighbourhood; but it needs much strength to scramble over the precipitous rocks, to get a full view of the landscape. Every tourist goes to see Rhaiadr Wennol, the waterfall of the Swallow, for the guide-books have described it so fully, and the tourists' coach usually stays there for travellers to alight and examine it. It is about two miles from Bettws-y-Coed, and as we pass the road the noise of its stupendous fall of waters rising from the wood, sounds loud after rain has fallen. A short walk, and the descent of a hill, brings the traveller to three large falls of water, which rush down wildly over rugged, precipitous, and oblong masses of rocks; and the crags and ravines, richly wooded, and decked with flowers and soft mosses, form a grand and beautiful scene, where the spray dashes abundantly, and often exhibits the rich tints of the rainbow, which is formed by the reflection of surrounding waters. It is one of the finest waterfalls in North Wales.

Foss Novin is another of the most picturesque scenes around Bettws, and is reached by a walk through beautiful landscape of about a mile and a half. It is a narrow glen, where the river Conway rushes down through rocks of tremendous height, and the ravine at one part is so narrow, that it is dark and shadowed. Trees of beautiful form, and some of majestic size, grow all down the rocks, and the river runs over or through large masses, which are often green and slippery with water weeds. Foss Novin is often painted, and several pictures of this scene have been exhibited, both in the exhibitions of the Royal Academy and in water-colour exhibitions. Mr. Reed made a water-coloured picture of this place, and, having called it the Fairy Glen, visitors often inquire for the Fairy Glen, and the cottagers know not where to direct them in finding it. We have heard that some earlier artist had made a picture of this place, and introduced a number of fays and sprites; but it needs no fairy spirit to give it a charm, and though the pencil can better express its beauty than the pen can describe it, yet these are beyond all mortal power of delineation. The Welsh name—a stream in the dark—is most truly expressive.

Then the Conway Falls, where over vast beds of rock, and amid grand wooded mountains, the noble river winds its troubled way; the Falls of the Ledsor, among wild mountain scenery, are within reach of a good walk; and a better pedestrian may accomplish the walk to the Falls of the Machno, which has beauties of its own; or he may go to the Castle of Dolwydellan, one of the most ancient fortresses in Wales. It is beneath the mountain of Moll Siabod, which, at Bettws-y-Coed, stands out in precipitous grandeur to our view, wherever we go

from the village; and the two square towers of the castle are on a high rock: it was built about the year 500. It was the birth-place of Llewelyn the Great, and is believed to be the last stronghold which resisted the advances of Edward I. Capel Curig, too, which is only four miles from Bettws, forms another walk of interest among wild mountain scenery, and geologists go thither to find the serpentine, which is abundant there.

A walk of a very few minutes from Bettws brings us to the old mail road, amidst whose calm and quiet beauty of wooded hills and softly rolling streams, W. F. Witherington, R.A., painted the picture exhibited last season, called "Scene on the old mail road near Bettws-y-Coed." Lupton's picture of the "Old Road in North Wales" was painted not far from the same spot, and little nooks of beauty among rocks and trees and streams continually occur. The rugged stone bridges, too, in the neighbourhood, all so old and grey, are very interesting. One of them, still called Beaver's Bridge, points to the time when here, as in other places in this neighbourhood, those industrious little animals made their homes. They are gone now; but the merry squirrel still delights us in the woods about, and the chattering of the jay, and the three sharp notes of the woodpecker, and the chaffinch's joyous spink, spink, tell of the life amid the trees, while away over the mountains the kite sails gracefully, or the sparrow hawk hangs motionless. A friend who was on one of the mountains during a storm, saw a kite carried down by the wind till it came down at his very feet. Its wings were two feet across.

Among the rocks about Bettws are found pieces of white quartz crystal, and the mountains in all this region are full of mineral treasures. There is a lead mine now working, just above the fir wood that overlooks the village, and it may be reached either by the woodland walk, or through the more difficult ascent of a deep and precipitous but most picturesque ravine. The little broken wooden structure called "The Miners' Bridge," so often figured in photographs and drawings, consisting of a slight wooden railing over an impetuous torrent, was made by the miners themselves, to reach the scene of their daily work by a shorter route from the village, and they are highly amused at the interest which it excites among lovers of the picturesque. "We never thought anything of it," said one miner to me, "till visitors came and found out that it was very wonderful, and now everybody goes to see it." The lead mine, which is now worked, is called by a Welsh name signifying Bogtree Pool, for a large pool had to be drained before commencing operations. The mine is more than a mile in extent, but is shallow—at no part more than twenty-four fathoms deep. The lead lies in veins in the rock, sometimes forming a narrow line scarcely an inch wide; at other places being four feet broad. The working of this mine has been attended with great expense, owing to the large quantity of sulphur which is found there. A small amount of silver occurs among the lead, in this place, but not enough to yield much profit, a ton of lead scarcely yielding more silver than is worth twenty shillings. The lead, when freshly taken out of the mine, is very bright and beautiful. It shines like silver, and reminds us that the common comparison, "dull as lead," must refer to that mineral long after it has left the mine. A slight touch, or long exposure to the air, will remove its brightness, which no process will afterwards restore, and to see it in its primitive beauty, we must break the specimen and gain a new surface. The person from whom I received my information about the mine was an intelligent man, whose business it is to keep the machinery in repair. He informed

me that the miners at work there are men of good moral and religious character, and without exception members of the Temperance Society. The head or captain of the mine, as he is termed, is a Cornish man, and it was pleasant to hear here, as in other mines and quarries of North Wales, the testimony of the workers to the kindness and liberality shown by the owners of the property to workmen who receive any injury, or in any way need their assistance. A lime quarry lies a little further off, and on this lofty hill, at the top of the fir forest, there is a very interesting farmhouse, which is two hundred years old, and is picturesque from its thick walls and ancient appearance. It is called Dinscoid.

There is a mountain stream in the wood, which falls down a rocky crevice, looking clear as crystal, and hurrying on to the Llugwy below. There are times when the refuse of the lead mine is washed into this stream, and then it becomes filled with poisonous matter, and in a less degree produces a deleterious effect on the waters of the Llugwy. Strangers among mountains near mines should be careful how they taste of these streams, so lovely to the eye, but oft times containing injurious properties. An artist told me that when he first came to Bettws, he felt very ill one day after drinking of the Llugwy, but he supposed that his illness arose from some unknown cause, and did not refer it to the water. A few days afterwards, however, he quenched his thirst at the same stream. Similar illness followed the draught, the symptoms in the latter case being more severe than in the former, and on going back to the river afterwards, he saw, upon a more attentive inspection, a number of dead fish floating down the stream. The people of Bettws know these circumstances well, and never drink of the Llugwy, for there are in abundance around them streams of the sweetest and purest water.

Bettws must be a very healthy place, and so our party always found it. Standing high, and having the pure and breezy air of mountainous regions, highly oxygenated too by means of the thousands of trees about it, and with rivers running so rapidly, that, like the waves of the sea, they stir the air round them, it has some of the most important conditions of health. Yet, when we examined the tombstones in the churchyard, they did not indicate a high average of longevity. The drawbacks to health, however, are not such as to affect visitors, and some are gradually disappearing. The houses, now made comfortable for their reception, were once close and dark, ill ventilated and ill drained. The people of Bettws knew nothing of all those disquisitions on sanitary measures, which have for the last ten years occupied public attention. So little had public news troubled the village, that a friend who had come here in the spring, after that terrible winter of suffering to our countrymen in the Crimea, found the people here quite unacquainted with it, and ignorant of the fact that our country had been at war. Cowper might have found in Bettws the place which he longed for—

" Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumours of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war
Should never reach me more."

The people who live among mountains, often live a sedentary life in the winter, when their occupation is not necessarily out of doors. Large regions around, covered with snow and frost, and pathless woods, are not likely to tempt them out, and they are not of that class who would take a walk from the sense of the need of exercise to health. There is also, both in summer and winter, a great deal of rain among mountains. One practice among the inhabitants during the wet weather is

singularly injudicious. No matter for the rain, "they are used to it," they say, and hence the out-door labour is not interrupted; the women stand outside their cottage doors washing, or walk deliberately about the village, while the rain is continuing steadily, or even pouring heavily; the clothing becomes quite wetted, and is worn through the day, without any concern. Even little children in groups in the road, go on with their play during rain; while in an English village not only is every child taught to run for shelter on the first approach of rain, but the careful mother is anxious till all are gathered in. Little Welsh children, however, in all other respects most carefully tended and warmly loved, and well taught, are allowed to wear wet clothing for hours in the day, and are hence likely to have the seeds of disease early sown.

It must be admitted that "Welsh weather" is not favourable either to artists or tourists, and that it causes many disappointments. Nevertheless, the rain, which is often truly magnificent, fills the waterfalls, and when it alternates with sunshine, or when there is sunshine and rain together in the landscape, the rainbows are numerous and beautiful. Never in lowlands do we see such rainbows. On one day I have seen fourteen. Now the arch spanned the mountain side, now it threw its glorious tints over the forest trees, or it was literally the bow in the clouds. One of our earliest acts in the morning, was to watch the cloud-wreaths on the mountains, for if they moved higher, then the sun might be expected; but if they came lower and lower, then the rain was coming too.

LEDESDALE GRANGE.

A TALE OF COAL FIELDS AND CORN FIELDS.

CHAPTER I.—LOCKBARTON IN A BUSTLE—MR. LUCAS IN PERPLEXITY, AND HOW HE GOT OUT OF IT.

It was market-day in the prosperous town of Lockbarton,—the one day which, of the six devoted to toil or pleasure, served in some degree to relieve the monotony of the remaining five. Not a very interesting or exciting locality in a general way, was that most worthy town; not a great deal was there apparent on the surface to indicate the steady under-current of business life perpetually flowing on. For Lockbarton was a busy town, and a populous town, and the most rising town in the midland counties, as all the world knew, or ought to have known. Was it not fast becoming a rival of its great neighbour, Gunstaple, though ever so much later in its appearance on the commercial stage? And did it not send up two members to parliament? And had it not a mayor and corporation, a market-place and music-hall? And in short, was it not possessed of everything, and did it not perform everything that ought to be performed or possessed by a great and important borough in this exacting age? Surely it did, and yet, for all that, a stranger happening on an ordinary day to pass through its streets, might have felt tempted to pronounce Lockbarton slightly a dull, possibly even a drowsy looking specimen of its kind. It might have occurred to him that the principal shops had so very little outside, that they would require wonderful internal linings to stand their ground; that those who perambulated the streets had a go-to-sleep air about them rather than otherwise; and that a certain unpronounceable *something* was apparent, which seemed to say, on behalf of the inhabitants, as once the old India House is reported to have stated on its own behalf, "The style we prefer is the *hum-drum!*"

But on market-day it was quite another thing. Then

indeed did shops and shopkeepers put the best foot foremost, and that successfully. No trifling demand was made that day upon their energies; but they were able to meet it. Their customers were many in number and critical in judgment; but they were ready for them. Take the drapers' shops alone on that occasion. What female ordinarily endowed with feminine susceptibilities could pass without a pang that gorgeous heap of ribbon, that elegant display of silks, in folds arranged so dexterously to catch and charm the eye? Could the "strong-minded woman" herself have gazed unmoved on bonnets ready trimmed and formed to fascinate? Assuredly we think not. And the other warehouses were not behindhand in their own department. How spicy the grocers looked! What an exquisite idea of puff paste was emitted from the windows of the confectioners! Where was the olfactory organ which could calmly sustain the assault made upon it by one particular eating-house, at one o'clock precisely? The poulterers! We draw the veil; if the neighbourhood of Lockbarton had a weakness, it was in the direction of a delicate young chicken, ducks, and turkeys in their season. What the poulterers' shops were equal to, when occasion called, is not for us to testify.

There were, nevertheless, pleasanter occupations than walking up High Street on market-day. It was very well to look on the scene of action from a distance; but the constant pressure of somebody else's basket against your sides, the frequent rubbing of somebody else's boot against your shins, is not conducive, generally speaking, either to progress or amiability. On a fine day the grievance was less intolerable; but the sun did not shine upon Lockbarton at all as often as could have been desired, and the rain rained very much more often; so that, if the streets were sloppy, and you, being a person not of an irritable, but an excitable temperament, were at all in a hurry, then, truly you would run the risk of being much discomposed in your passage through the High Street of Lockbarton on market-day.

On the market-day in question, an elderly gentleman was endeavouring to thread that passage, whose present expression of countenance was by no means an index of that which generally characterized him. It was not a good-humoured expression, and no wonder, for he had been sorely hampered and obstructed. The market was now nearly over, and the people were pouring down the street as he was wending his laborious way to the top. "Could you, my good woman, oblige me by moving that basket?" "Will you stand aside there and let me pass?" "I say, boy, look before you!" were the reiterated expressions called forth by the perils of his career. "Holloa, there!" as some individual, more hurried than quick-sighted, comes bounding against his chest, and then begs his pardon. "Really," soliloquized the elderly gentleman, as he at last found a leisure moment for wiping his damp brow, "this is a most agreeable town to live out of!" He had now reached the top of High Street, and, taking his stand under shelter of a shop portico, he watched with a keenly observant eye the various groups of persons who were collected near him. He might have classified the two sides of the street under the separate heads of "Church" and "State," that on which he stood being the Ecclesiastical. Whether anything less secular than a market had been afloat he could not tell, but it was certain that in less than five minutes he had been passed by no fewer than twelve or fifteen black coats and white "chokers," who asked each other of their welfare and of their wives. He noticed particularly, that most of the latter were invalided, and nearly all the children recovering from something! But

it was the opposite side, "the State," to which his attention was more especially directed.

A large hotel, which, in default of the correct title, we may call the "Star," seemed to be the centre of attraction. Clustered under its archway, and filling up the pavement and road to a considerable distance beyond it, appeared a party of from thirty to forty men—or, we should rather say, gentlemen, for all were well dressed, and all wore an air of considerable responsibility. The coal and iron-masters of the district formed some of the principal actors in this scene. The interior of the hotel had been their place of rendezvous, and their talk had been not of "bullocks," but of "pigs;" of pigs inanimate—leaving them to do the grunting! They were now separating, but seemed to find occasion for several parting addresses. Our elderly gentleman kept his eye fixed upon the entrance-yard, as though watching for some one in particular. Presently a noble-looking hound bounded from under the archway in a high state of expectancy and excitement. He was closely followed by a horseman, and at his appearance the elderly gentleman hoisted his stick, in the hope of attracting his attention. The rider was a young man, with black hair and handsome features, evidently not unconscious that he was mounted on a first-rate animal, and keeping a first-rate seat. He did not observe the hoisted stick, for another claimant on his attention had shown himself in the person of a thin weazel-like little man, who had hold of the reins and was speaking to him.

"Going home, Mr. Purdon?"

"I am," was the laconic reply.

"Quiet, now, old fellow, steady there," to the horse, who not a little resented this obstruction in his course, "Down, Nigel, down; go away, sir."

"What time do you dine?" continued his interrogator.

"Not later than five, as I hope and believe; what's in the wind now?"

"Well, if you dine at five, I shall give you a look in between six and seven, if it's agreeable."

It might have been agreeable, but Mr. Purdon's face expressed something considerably short of delight, as he replied, "Very well, do so." But afterwards another thought seemed to strike him, and he called out to the little man, who was moving away, "Come in at five, Sneyd, and take some dinner with us."

"No, thank you," was the answer, "I have business at Ledesdale which will keep me till after six."

Only now Mr. Purdon caught sight of the stick. He was off his horse in a moment, and by the side of the stick's owner. "My dear sir, who would have thought of your being in town? how did you get in?"

"In very primitive fashion," replied the elderly gentleman, showing his mud-bespattered boots; "but the more interesting question at present, how am I to get out? rests, I believe, with you. Your excellent wife, and my very good hostess, assured me you would find somebody to give me a lift, or else see me safely into one of your 'Swift' packets; so I am at your mercy."

"You shall not be at the mercy of the Swift packet if I can help it," said the young man, laughing—"Let me see, now—take my horse, Mr. Lucas."

"I think I see myself on your back, Captain," replied his friend, as the excited animal rolled his large eyes, and pawed the ground in his intense desire to be off. "Well, I will take him, you know, if you recommend me."

"I believe I can hardly go so far as that; but all I can say is, I place him very heartily at your service."

Just at that moment a dashing-looking carriage and pair pulled up before the shop door, with an impetus which had something almost alarming about it.

"Mr. Purdon, mamma," said a girlish voice; and a face the reverse of girlish showed itself from the interior of the carriage, and with "nods and wreathed smiles" expressed its delight at the recognition.

"Your better half left behind, I suppose?" said the lady, gaily.

"Yes, but a friend of mine is here," said Mr. Purdon, "who has walked into town, and has no idea how to get out again. You haven't a spare seat, have you? Allow me—Mr. Lucas—Mrs. Armitage."

Mrs. Armitage was only "too happy;" there were only herself and the two girls, and she could so easily "drop" Mr. Lucas as they drove through Ledesdale; it was quite a happy coincidence that they chanced to meet.

"A great improvement upon the packet, certainly," said Mr. Lucas, as he planted himself beside the lady in her elegant equipage; "but it is hardly fair to introduce such a crusty, fusty old gentleman into such good company." He was looking then at two pretty delicately-looking girls who were opposite to him in the carriage. Mrs. Armitage of course felt it her duty playfully to rally him upon this speech; and she entertained him, during their drive, with a flow of conversation which she naturally considered must go very far indeed towards rendering it and herself peculiarly agreeable.

A CRUISE ON THE WINNIPEG TO RED RIVER.

We all remember, in the maps of our school days, the blank spaces of North America between Lake Superior and the Pacific, bordered with a chain of unauthorized-looking mountains along the western marge, and interspersed with a few shadowy patches of water, which we, suspicious juveniles, had a strong idea were put in just for appearance sake, and to save the reputation of geographers. It was the land of prairies and buffaloes, grizzly bears and Red Indians—so much was certain. We thought we should like to live there better than in the civilized eastern regions, thickly sown with cities: for was it not a delightful terra incognita, bristling with all sorts of dangers from wild beasts and wild men? Having since arrived at years of discretion, we are not so sure that such would be our choice; we think we should prefer a location beside Ullswater or Killarney to a fort on Lake Winnipeg.

But the blank on the map is rapidly filling up with real rivers and authentic lakes; the terra incognita is being explored, and brought into the common daylight of geographic fact. That heretofore hazy sheet of water, margined with fancy bays and headlands, and called Lake Winnipeg, is realized to be a great shallow inland sea, covering 8500 miles of surface, and circled with a coastline of nearly 1000; and upon which we will now, if you please, take a cruise.

We embark on 9th August, 1858, with Mr. Fleming, (one of the employés on Professor Hind's exploring expedition,) not at first upon the lake, but upon its greatest affluent, the broad Saskatchewan. Here, where palings and flagstaff, and a few wooden houses flanked with wigwams indicate a settlement called Fort la Corne, the stream is 960 feet wide and twenty deep, travelling north-east at the rate of three miles hourly. We step on board—if the term be not too substantial for the craft—a birch-bark canoe, which can be darned with flexible roots, or soldered with pitch, as required; its crew are two half-caste Indians, Ojibway and Blackfoot by descent. We paddle twenty miles the first afternoon, then draw to land, kindle a driftwood fire, and try to be comfortable for the

night on a couch of nothing softer than boulder-stones. For four days we find no variety: the banks may be a little higher or lower, the underwood thicker or thinner; on the whole our scenery is tame, until we reach Fort Cumberland, which is after the pattern of all the other forts garrisoning Rupert's Land: wooden palings and houses, and outlying wigwams, some fields of barley and potatoes, the only cultivated patch for myriads of acres all round. Here we find a brigade of boats just come in from Mackenzie River and the Arctic regions, laden with peltries; presently they depart for York Factory, their voyageurs singing joyously in chorus. This Cumberland Fort is the confluence of two great systems of water communication between the Arctic seas and the Pacific; more than one of our polar expeditions has here recruited, and in the garden is a trace of one—a sun-dial erected by Sir John Richardson.

Afterwards, the shores are solitary and swampy for a great way. One Indian hunter and his family, in a small canoe, are the only living things we meet, beside a black fox and a beaver—the latter industrious among trees. In such scarcity of quadrupeds the hunter has taken to fishing, and is drying sturgeon for his winter stores. To these aborigines the waters are what the rice-field is to the Hindoo, yielding the staple of life.

Al! our travelled eyes refuse to believe their sight—a church spire in the wilderness! Above the perpetual alluvial flat, touched by gleams of sunset, rises the strange object; and then we naturally expect to see the pretty white cottages and fields of waving grain which surround it; an English missionary lives here. Again alluvial flats to Cedar Lake, which is a mere pond on the Saskatchewan, though much of it is below the horizon as we traverse from wooded point to point, and are a day and a half crossing its expanse.

Hark! the voyageurs' song again! We meet another brigade of boats, fourteen in number, toiling up stream from Lake Winnipeg. Mr. Christie, the factor in command, is eloquent on the need of steamers to navigate these noble waters, and transport the huge freights which now travel slowly and toilfully in bateaux. We fully agree with him, being tolerably tired by this time of our birch-bark equipage, and pass on to Cross Lake, where we come on the traces of a burnt and drowned forest, the ridges covered with charred trunks, and the swamps with soaked shrubs.

The Saskatchewan is now close to its resting-place in Winnipeg, though flowing on a level considerably higher; and at some older period it is possible that the rush was made at once in perpendicular descent over a precipice: but the torrent has eaten through its limestone barrier, and changed a cataract (perchance) into a rapid. For almost three miles it flings itself along a rocky channel: and in all America this is the grand rapid, as Niagara is the waterfall. We shoot down the distance in our frail canoe, carried headlong by those great breakers and surges, whizzing past points of rock, deafened by the thunder of the torrent and blinded by its spray, yet enjoying the astonishing swiftness of motion, and excited by the sense of dexterously-avoided danger. We have indeed passed "the river that runs swift," which is Saskatchewan in Indian parlance.

Safe in smooth water, the question occurs—How did Mr. Christie's brigade of boats, how does ever any boat, climb this rapid up stream? Our voyageurs explain. They have often helped to "track" boats through this difficulty, and, being harnessed by leather belts, have drawn them against the full force of the current, by running along the top of the limestone cliffs.

Presently we reach the mouth of the Saskatchewan,

where its thousand miles of stream join placidly with a lake worthy of such contribution. From our bivouac on the shingly beach, we see the vast grey level of Winnipeg spreading to the edge of the sky afar. South-east lies the great dim promontory of Kitchi-nashi, or the Big Point, a spur twenty-four miles long. Fifteen hours of tracking the next day along sandy beaches brings us to camp on its extremity. We overtake eight small canoes filled with Swampy Crees, paddling to the fishing grounds: subsisting meanwhile on gull eggs and young birds, from an almost exhaustless supply stored on the sandy islets. Their chief is somewhat suspicious about us, and in his superior wisdom thinks our observations and instruments must be connected with a design for seizing on this valuable country, which for scores of miles inland is nothing but "muskeg" or trembling swamp, composed of such moss and muck as have formed peat tracts and bogs in Britain. However, after a day or two they are reassured, and establish lodges amicably beside our bivouac, and confess that their summer fishing has failed at the Grand Rapid; consequently they are often reduced to the roots of bulrushes for food, when gulls fail.

And now we find that, like other shallow natures, this Lake Winnipeg is very easily lashed into a rage: a wind of moderate strength covers it with angry waves and foam. We are often obliged to run for shelter into sluggish creeks and behind low islets. Once are we compelled to lighten cargo by throwing overboard some of our valued geological specimens. He who has ever chipped fossil from rock will comprehend the grief with which a very fine orthoceratite (a massive straight-chambered shell of extinct species and the silurian period) is cast into the undiscerning deep, and lost to museums for ever.

At the little Saskatchewan river we find more Indians encamped, and catching white-fish in great numbers by a process reminding one of our schoolboy takes of herring fry. Each man with a scoop net on a pole has built himself a little stone inclosure at the edge of the stream, and as fast as he scoops up fish he throws them into this cage; others take them out and cure them by splitting and drying in the sun. These Indians are hospitably inclined, poor nomads, and in a certain wigwam have cooked a birch-rind dish of fish, sprinkled with blackish salt, which it is our duty as guests to consume to the last morsel, or we shall give offence. We do not foresee that in a few days that dubiously-cooked fish would be a priceless luxury, black salt and all.

Hitherto we have lived on the potted meat called pemmican, with such game as could be found; but ninety-six hours' imprisonment, from storms, reduces us to a few pounds of the former in a mouldy state: and we are obliged to make a rule of only one meal a day when weatherbound, unless we have the good fortune to catch anything eatable. But animated nature has deserted these wilds. One morning when we are at our last mouthful, and our last charge of powder, a baldheaded eagle comes wheeling above us in great circles: and that last charge brings him down into our midst with a collapse—a most acceptable plenishing to our larder, though a trifle tough.

The sixth of September finds us at the base of the Cat Head, which the Indians say is the abode of a manitou or spirit; the all-sufficient reason being a rambling at the base, in caverns open to the surges. Thirty-five feet is no great altitude for a cliff, but in this swampy region so much limestone is a phenomenon worthy of supernatural explanation; and it is named from the unlucky chase of a hunter after a lynx, say the Crees.

Our eagle being consumed all to his feathers, we are glad to ascend the Jack-fish river, to the Indian basket-

traps set near its mouth. We find our civilized salmon-weirs at home anticipated by this wilderness contrivance—a fence of poles built across the streams, sloping with the current, allowing the water to pass through; a yard-wide opening near the bank, conducting the fish into a square box with a grated bottom, sloping upwards, through which falls the stream, leaving them stranded. They have more wit than to enter this prison during daylight, but at night see no danger, and after the first bewildered flounder are tapped on the head by the mallet of a watching Indian, and flung ashore. We sit up all night, and catch nearly two hundred fish of various sorts, chiefly "gold-eyes" and pike, wherewith we deeply load our canoe, and travel on.

Five days through the narrows of the lake, until we reach the rushes at Red River mouth, where an Indian hunter gives us some of the hundred wild duck he has shot during the day—reeds innumerable, far as the eye can see; only an occasional strip of sand and willows to relieve the prospect. Six sluggish channels fuse the Red River with Winnipeg, which last signifies by interpretation, "The Dirty Water," and deserves not so equivocal a name.

Entering the main mouth, and reflecting what univalued meadows might be embanked from these marshes, we paddle along for fourteen miles, till the whole country gradually rises, woods appear in clumps, and we begin to traverse the richest prairie in the world. Presently, neat white houses adorn the banks, amid inclosures of garden and field; we have reached an Indian missionary village, where such aborigines as we left gnawing bulrushes on the marshes of the Winnipeg, are changed into civilized and Christianized men and women. Thenceforth the shores are no longer solitary; farmhouses of settlers rise at short intervals for thirty miles to Fort Garry, the capital of the region named in blue books Assiniboia. It is the head quarters of the fur trade of North America at present, and must be hereafter the central dépôt of a vast agricultural territory; where are already substantial stone churches, a college, a see-house for the Bishop of Rupert's Land, groups of commodious dwelling-houses, the limestone bastions and turrets of a regular fortification, and the confluence of two superb streams, the Assiniboine and Red River.

And what a prairie, looking west! Many million acres of the richest mould, unsurpassed for fertility, lie unoccupied except by roaming herds of buffalo. Concerning its capabilities, listen to the words of Mr. Gowler, a flourishing settler, when he speaks to Professor Hind: "Ten thousand head of cattle might feed and fatten there (in proximity to Fort Garry) for nothing. If I found it worth my while, I could inclose 50 or 500 acres, and from every acre get 30 or 40 bushels of wheat, year after year. I could grow Indian corn, barley, oats, flax, hemp, hops, tobacco, anything you wish, to any amount; but what would be the use? There are no markets; it is a chance if my wheat is bought, and my potatoes I may have to give to the pigs. If we only had a market!"

This cry must bring an answer and a fulfilment. The abundance that lies dormant in this Selkirk settlement is pined for by the dense populations of European cities. An organized water communication, a railway line from Lake Superior, would bring its superfluous wealth of subsistence to the doors of the poor. The market and the supply cannot remain long severed. The distance from Liverpool to Red River by the lakes and boundary line, could easily be reduced to twenty-two days; and Mr. Gowler would no longer sow his cereals on chance, nor would the population of the settlement continue many months at its present low figure of 6000 souls.